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Security Council

Sixtieth year

Provisional

5156th meeting

Wednesday, 30 March 2005, 10.05 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Sardenberg	(Brazil)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Argentina	Mr. Mayoral
	Benin	Mr. Zinsou
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Denmark	Ms. Løj
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Oshima
	Philippines	Mr. Baja
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Mahiga
	United States of America	Mr. Fendrick

Agenda

Wrap-up discussion on the work of the Security Council for the current month

Letter dated 18 March 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2005/188)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

05-28807 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Wrap-up discussion on the work of the Security Council for the current month

Letter dated 18 March 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2005/188)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Belarus, Cuba, Egypt, the Gambia, Indonesia, Luxembourg, Morocco, Pakistan, Rwanda, Somalia and Tunisia, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of members to document S/2005/188, containing the text of a letter dated 18 March 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

At this stage, I would like to make some introductory remarks with regard to the objectives, scope and procedures of this wrap-up meeting.

Today, the Security Council is holding a wrap-up meeting on the African dimension in the work of the Security Council. In prior consultations, members of the Council agreed that this should be a public meeting that non-members of the Council would be encouraged to attend. I would like to commend those delegations that have requested to participate in this meeting. In its national capacity, the Brazilian delegation sent a letter to the Secretary-General (S/2005/188), to which is annexed a background paper that provides information regarding the discussion we are now to undertake.

Over the years, inter- and intra-State conflicts in Africa have required the attention and involvement of the Security Council, in line with its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The response of this Council to each particular case has varied during these years, and a number of best practices and lessons learned have been gradually incorporated into its usual approach. Action by the Council has resulted in some cases of success and others in which the re-emergence of conflict has occurred. The current mandates established by the Council benefit highly from those experiences of the past.

The Security Council's assessment of its work, methods and procedures must be an ongoing process. The wrap-up meeting we are holding today should offer an opportunity to discuss the manner in which that is reflected in the daily work of the Council when addressing African subjects.

During this month of March, the Council has already adopted five resolutions on African issues. A number of reports — more than 10 — have been issued and considered by the Council. More than 20 formal and informal meetings related to the situation in different countries in Africa have been held.

This wrap-up session should not be an occasion for readdressing the particularities of specific situations in Africa; it should provide for an institutional debate that builds on previous discussions vis-à-vis the current agenda of the Council and its methods of work.

On the procedural aspects related to this wrap-up session, it has been agreed that members and non-members of the Security Council are to alternate with every three speakers in delivering their statements. The order has been established by drawing lots. We would encourage concise and focused statements, which should not go far beyond the five minutes that have been stipulated. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their text in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

Mr. Motoc (Romania): As Romania aligns itself with the statement to be made shortly by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union, I would like here to make only a few specific comments.

We welcome the decision of the Brazilian presidency to convene a wrap-up meeting as a modality for assessing the work of the Security Council for this month, keeping the focus on a matter of primary importance. Indeed, the programme of work for this month has epitomized the African dimension in the Security Council's discharge of its responsibility for preserving international peace and security.

Almost 2,000 years ago, the Roman savant Pliny the Elder wrote that "There is always something new out of Africa". Mainly since the end of the cold war, what has come out of Africa has continually put the continent in a new and complex light from the standpoint of the Council. The existence of failed or failing States, and of ethnic and religious strife linked to disputes over land and water sharing and nurtured by extreme poverty, have all led to internal decay and the erosion of social fabric. As an African proverb says, "The drums of war are the drums of starvation".

A large array of transborder issues have further complicated the African conflict matrix. Armed groups easily trespass across borders in West Africa or in the Great Lakes region as sui generis mercenary armies. The insidious presence of weapons illegally trafficked in many parts of Africa, such as in the two areas just mentioned or in the Horn of Africa, has become both a symbol and an instrument of power, frequently filling the void left by collapsed State structures and institutions.

On the other hand, in our global world, the critical mass of conflict situations accumulated in Africa carries with it serious perils for international peace and security. Faced with an extensive African conflict agenda, the Security Council has not failed to react and to act. The Council has thus generated a massive investment, in political and material terms, by the international community in Africa, as well as for the sake of international peace and security. Romania has brought its share to this endeavour as an elected member of the Security Council and also in the light of its good bilateral relationship with many African States, founded, among other things, on a strong human component, given the fact that thousands of Africans have studied throughout the years at Romanian universities.

In the "tool box" with which African issues have been dealt with by the Council, the instruments available have increased in number and diversified qualitatively. Some in particular have generated a capital of lessons learned with regard to increasing the effectiveness of the political and diplomatic energy invested in conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict reconstruction on the continent.

First, Africa is the main host of United Nations peacekeeping operations — presently eight in number. The surge in peacekeeping activities in Africa continued in 2004, with the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and the United Nations Operation in Burundi (UNOB), and in 2005, with the United Nations Mission in the Sudan as the latest addition. The concentration in Africa of the bulk of the peacekeeping troops deployed today in the world is proof that the continent has become the destination of choice for that crucial kind of United Nations involvement in maintaining peace and security around the globe.

The Council has authorized more multidimensional mandates for United Nations operations, with a three-fold component: civilian, military and civilian police. Romania, which contributes troops and police personnel to a number of United Nations missions in Africa — including the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, ONUB, UNOCI and the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea — supports that approach as a practical way of making peacekeeping successful in Africa.

On the other hand, as the missions in Côte d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have shown, repeated adjustments of both mandate and strength have been necessary to increase their efficacy. What we have here is the capacity of the Council to adapt and to respond to developments on the ground. It is no less true that a better prediction of needs from the inception stage would help the missions to reach their objectives more rapidly.

The need for complementarity between peacekeeping and some specific tools provided by the United Nations Charter is manifest. As a more recent example, the Security Council has supported the appointment by the Secretary-General of a Special

Envoy for Ethiopia and Eritrea, who is thus multitasked.

Secondly, more than in other areas, the Security Council's missions to Africa have been a clear demonstration of continuing interest in and engagement with solving crises and conflicts on the continent. The Council intends to organize several missions to Africa this year. They should carry a powerful message that the Council remains focused on African issues. What such missions accomplish on the ground with regard to conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution is one of the most critical questions that should be addressed in their preparation.

Thirdly, my delegation would like to point to a specific internal tool of the Security Council with great potential to consolidate our in-depth tackling of critical African matters: the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa. We hope that the Council will soon adopt the Group's programme for the year, based on the draft presented by our colleagues from Benin, who are currently chairing the Group. We have every confidence that they will be able to boost the Group back into action.

Meanwhile, Romania considers that value could be added to the Council's decision-making on African issues by increased use of the capacities provided by the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for Special Assignments in Africa, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Africa, or the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa.

Conflicts in Africa cannot be resolved without taking their regional dimension fully into account. Both preventive measures and effective conflict management must be designed and implemented through active cooperation with and support from regional and subregional organizations. The Economic Community of West African States, mainly through its involvement in Liberia and Sierra Leone, has generated notable success stories. Sudan is the latest case in point reflecting participation of the regional organizations — the African Union and other regional organizations, in particular the European Union — as well as the cooperation with the United Nations. As an elected member of the Council, Romania has been a strong advocate of the comprehensive approach of the multifaceted Sudan dossier.

We welcome developments within the African Union to enhance its capacities for crisis management and to strengthen coordination with the United Nations, with subregional organizations and with non-African partners, such as the European Union and the G-8. African ownership and international partnership could be the synergetic platform for making the most of the investment directed to peace and security in Africa.

The thematic debate initiated by the Romanian presidency of the Council in July 2004 provided the opportunity to shed more light on the specific African experience in cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in post-conflict stabilization. We intend to follow on this theme on the occasion of our second Council presidency, in October this year. Against this backdrop, Romania took note with special interest of the pragmatic recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005). We stand ready to work with Council members, as well as with other Members of the Organization, to put those proposals into a decisional framework forged by consensus.

Finally, it is clear that there is a risk that the impact of each of these instruments, if taken separately, will remain weak. Therefore the Romanian delegation welcomes the approach advanced by the Brazilian delegation in the non-paper prepared for this meeting. We should indeed seek to increase the overall effectiveness of peace and security resources directed to Africa, and that implies a holistic approach. As another African proverb says, "It is not possible for one foot to create a footpath".

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): At the outset I would like to commend you, Mr. President, on your initiative in devoting this wrap-up meeting of the Security Council's work for March 2005 to African issues.

It is an established fact that for several years African issues have occupied the lion's share of the Council's monthly deliberations. The month now ending is no exception; it is fully representative of the international community's efforts to prevent, manage and settle conflicts in Africa. Indeed, no fewer than eight conflicts affecting the African continent have been the object of the Council's attention, from the oldest to the most recent. In the same vein, I would like to point out that six of the eight United Nations

peacekeeping operations on the continent, including the recently established Sudan mission and the Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau and the Political Office for Somalia, have benefited from this assessment.

Here, we should recall that Africa has half of the Organization's peacekeeping operations, involving the biggest number of military and police staff deployed — almost 61,000 of a total of 77,000 personnel, with a corresponding financial cost. This means that the format for the Council's work for the month of March gives us an excellent opportunity to deal with a range of issues linked to the quest for greater effectiveness in the actions of the international community on the continent. In this connection, my delegation would like to make the following comments.

The deployment of peacekeeping operations is an important stage in the process of conflict settlement, but their mere presence is not a guarantee of success in the pursuit of the ultimate objective, which is a lasting peace. It is widely acknowledged that to succeed, those operations must be based on an overall plan to deal with the consequences of a conflict: their military dimension — a ceasefire, disarmament, demobilization; and their human dimension — reintegration, readjustment, resettlement or, in the case of cross-border conflicts, repatriation; but also reasons which in most cases relate to equitable access to political power for all social groups involved. Finally, there must be a programme for the consolidation of peace that is viable in its institutional, social and development aspects.

The situations that the Security Council considered this month show that all international operations take place in support of such road maps. What I have in mind are the agreements — Naivasha for the conflict in the southern Sudan, Arusha for Burundi, Accra for Liberia, Linas-Marcoussis and Accra III for Côte d'Ivoire, Lusaka and subsequent agreements for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Algiers Agreement for Ethiopia and Eritrea — which, of course, are all of differing natures. I would like to add that in most of those situations United Nations operations have benefited from a robust, multidimensional mandate supported by a sanctions regime that is generally adequate. But, as shown by the indefinite extension of some of the oldest peacekeeping operations, it appears that we must face the fact that the crucial factor for conflict settlement remains the unambiguous political will of parties to a conflict to keep their commitments and the trust that necessarily must be established among them.

While the Charter has given to the Security Council enforcement measures that allow it to deal with the lack of political will on the part of one of the parties to a conflict, this does not come into play if there is distrust among the parties. In that case, there is no other choice but to resort to mediation, which remains almost exclusively regional and subregional in the African conflicts with which we have had to deal in March. In this regard I wish to pay a well-deserved tribute to the member States of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development for their recent achievements in the service of peace in southern Sudan and in Somalia and to the member States of the Economic Community of West African States for their tireless commitment in Western Africa. I wish to pay particular tribute to President Obasanjo, current Chairperson of the African Union, for his involvement in the settlement of the conflict in Darfur, and to President Mbeki for his mediation among the Ivorian parties, which has saved the day. As one can see, Africans themselves are, with talent and determination, and often with success, contributing to African solutions to the conflicts on the continent.

This brings me to deal with relations between the Security Council and the African Union (AU) in the framework of the arrangements in Chapter VIII of the Charter, the relevance of which is becoming increasingly obvious through the innovative concepts of the collective security system that is now emerging.

Taking into account the considerable increase in the need for human and material resources in peacekeeping and the firm determination of Africa to shoulder its share of responsibility in the management and settlement of conflicts on the continent — to which it gives additional value and an undeniable effectiveness — Algeria believes that relations between the United Nations and the African Union must now develop in an institutional framework that should eventually equip the collective security system with a genuine regional pillar provided with adequate resources for diplomatic and military intervention. The AU prepared for this by setting up a Peace and Security Council, which the international community welcomed, and by creating a standby force.

In renewing our appeal for the institutionalization of cooperation with the international community, my delegation would like to highlight the invaluable contribution made by the African Union mission to stabilizing the situation in Darfur, despite the limited resources available to it.

Finally, I cannot conclude without referring to the specific case of Somalia — which expects from the international community measures in support of the restored national consensus — as well as to the situations of other countries emerging from conflict, in particular Guinea-Bissau, which are still awaiting resolute action in the area of peacebuilding. Upon that depends the ultimate credibility of the reforms effort upon which we have embarked together.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): Let me express my gratitude to you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting. We appreciate this opportunity to reflect on the African dimension in the work of the Security Council.

I would like to associate myself with the statement to be delivered later by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union.

Peace and security in Africa constitute one of the major challenges to the international community. The problems we are facing are enormous. We have experienced failures and successes — but mostly successes — in our peacebuilding efforts. However, we must do even better, and must constantly look for ways and means to improve international efforts to secure lasting peace in Africa.

Against that background, let me briefly offer some thoughts on areas of action that we deem particularly important.

Cooperation between the Security Council and regional and subregional organizations should be developed even further. Progress has been made, and we welcome the strengthening of the practical cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, as demonstrated in the case of the African mission in the Sudan and the African mission in Burundi.

Denmark firmly believes that African ownership of and participation in conflict management should be further strengthened and encouraged. The Council should explore how to best support the ongoing efforts to build an African security architecture and should work closely with the African Union and regional organizations to advance ways and means of cooperation. That should not be misinterpreted as a way of extricating ourselves from the problems of the continent but, rather, as evidence of our firm conviction that Africa needs home-grown solutions to its problems. The goal should be to establish efficient partnerships and an equitable division of labour between the United Nations and African organizations.

Let me note that Denmark contributes actively to enhancing African regional and subregional organizations' capacity in conflict prevention, not only through the European Union, but also through substantial bilateral assistance. Thus, Denmark provides, through its Africa Programme for Peace, $40 million for capacity-building.

In the post-conflict phase, immediate peacebuilding efforts are essential for securing stability and for creating a solid foundation for long-term reconstruction and development. In that phase, a more comprehensive approach and better coherence are needed. Efforts in the field of institution-building, democracy, human rights, the rule of law and good governance, alongside disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programming, are crucial.

Making public institutions work in order to ensure the rule of law and provide security and basic welfare to the public is a long-term endeavour, but it is central to the goal of conflict management and peacebuilding. Whatever mechanism we set up to reach that goal, the challenge is to ensure the involvement of all stakeholders. These include national Governments and regional organizations, as well as bilateral and multilateral donors. Pooling resources and pursuing a common peacebuilding strategy must be our goal.

In his report entitled "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005), the Secretary-General proposes the creation of an intergovernmental peacebuilding commission. Denmark strongly supports that proposal.

The conflict pattern in parts of Africa is regional in character. This regional aspect must be addressed in peacebuilding efforts. Together with other actors in the political, security, humanitarian and development fields, the Council must design its response to conflict within an overall subregional framework for joint and integrated action. Creating lasting peace is complex and needs a comprehensive and all-inclusive approach.

Cooperation among United Nations missions is an important element in a comprehensive response that recognizes the regional aspects of conflict. We strongly believe that more could still be done to join forces and pool assets across United Nations missions in West and Central Africa to better tackle cross-border issues. The effort to stop sanctions-busters, soldiers of fortune and mercenaries from operating across borders and taking their deadly business from one country to another could be increased by mandating peace operations to engage in the monitoring and enforcement of sanctions. This effort would include joint cross-border controls. Further sharing of resources would free up capacity for other pressing tasks and make room for economies of scale. We recognize the practical problems involved, but instead of being paralysed by such problems, we should stimulate new and constructive thinking.

In conclusion, peacebuilding is a complex business, and we face enormous challenges. The peacebuilding effort is an excellent investment, but we must service it and be patient in protecting it, eventually harvesting the fruit of success. We must be in there for the long haul. Fleeting interests, premature disengagement and lack of willingness to address the root causes are likely to lead to renewed conflict and to the loss of the initial investment.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Morocco, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Bennouna (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I should like first of all to thank you, Sir, for having chosen as the theme for this debate, in the context of your presidency this month, the African dimension in the work of the Security Council. It is to your credit, and to the credit of your country, that you have done so. But that is no surprise, because we are conscious of the commitment of Brazil — a country that is so close to the culture and civilization of Africa — to the cause of the continent, which suffered the scourge of colonization and slavery, and which was divided up among Powers with disregard for the ethnic, historical or cultural unity of the peoples affected.

As a consequence of that painful history, which ended only in the 1960s — thanks, in particular, to the action of the United Nations — Africa has been dragged into many fratricidal conflicts and has been rendered vulnerable to new predators, such as those who traffic in arms, as well as in vital natural resources and precious stones — the infamous blood diamonds.

In an Africa that has been torn apart and ruined by inter-State conflict and civil war, devastating pandemics have spread to a greater extent than anywhere else in the world. I am referring not only to HIV/AIDS, but also, lest we forget, to malaria, a disease that still kills millions of Africans every year, with the result that life expectancy on the continent is the lowest in the world, with entire professions, including teachers, being decimated by the disease.

Thus, the fact that most of the Council's work concerns Africa and that Africa receives the bulk of the resources allocated for peacekeeping clearly reflects the seriousness and the scope of the problem the continent faces and demonstrates the extent of the international community's mobilization and unity in tackling the problem.

The Council has strengthened its peacekeeping missions in the affected regions, regularly honing their mandates so that they can act effectively, putting out the fires raging in entire countries, such as in Sierra Leone and Liberia, and putting an end to the dangerous course of civil war in order to prevent the repetition of crimes against humanity and genocide, separating the parties until the attainment of a lasting, peaceful solution enabling all of a country's sons and daughters to take part in its development, with equal rights. That is the case, for example, in Côte d'Ivoire, and we hope that the mediation process under way there will soon produce irreversible positive results.

As the representative of Denmark has just stated, the Council is aware of the linkages between the conflicts of a single subregion, such as West Africa. There, the Council established a regional Office in Dakar to coordinate the work on the ground of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. That subregional approach has been employed with a certain degree of success, but the road to be travelled remains long and arduous in the Great Lakes subregion, as the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo — a country as large as Europe, with immense resources — is linked to most of that country's neighbours. The Council is taking action by reinforcing its resources in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. At the same time, it is not neglecting the subregional dimension or the resolution of the problems in neighbouring countries — essential for finding a rapid solution to the

Congolese crisis, for which we all fervently hope. In that context, we appreciate the Council's successive missions to observe on the ground the results of its efforts in recent years.

Also at the subregional level, to assist the brotherly countries of the Mano River subregion — Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone — His Majesty King Mohammed VI, in cooperation with the Secretary-General, has undertaken mediation efforts in the spirit of the February 2002 Rabat summit, so that those countries can engage in dialogue and cooperation in order to prevent, as has been mentioned, cross-border incursions from various directions and to tackle the problem of mercenaries.

The Kingdom of Morocco has made significant efforts to contribute to peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a country that is very dear to us, as we were, at the time of the first crisis — in 1960, at the height of the cold war, when we ourselves had just achieved independence — among the first countries to contribute troops to the peacekeeping force in Congo. Today, we continue to extend our support in the very troubled eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, so that the country can recover its stability and play its essential role in that part of Africa.

We were also present at the time when the United Nations, in very difficult circumstances, was faced with the Somali crisis. As well, we recently responded to the appeal of the Security Council when it acted to stabilize the situation in Côte d'Ivoire and to assist in the process of restoring peace in a country that had been the guiding light in the West African subregion, a country with which we have had brotherly ties for a very long time, even before the creation of the present-day States or the European colonization.

We can all be very proud of the efforts for peace that the Council has carried out in the Sudan, another brotherly country ravaged by so many decades of fratricidal conflict. Last year, the Council met in Kenya and secured the parties' commitment to peace and to the rebuilding of a society in which the parties could achieve their full development and direct their own affairs, while contributing to the security and the prosperity of the nation as a whole. Since then, the Council has seen that goal achieved, and the two parties have been received in the Council Chamber. Once the Peace Agreement was concluded, the Council took the decision to build on that peace by sending a robust peacekeeping force and by ensuring significant financial support.

We hope that, after witnessing the massacre of thousands of innocent people, the Darfur region will find peace and that the perpetrators — at least, I would say as a lawyer, those against whom there are solid accusations — will be brought to justice.

However, the Council has not only put out fires and helped many to take the road to peace. As in Mozambique and Angola, it has also taken action to reintegrate yesterday's combatants into civil and political society, to re-establish the rule of law and to facilitate the transition towards genuine peace.

In that context, one can say without being accused of being overly optimistic that the continent is seeing certain positive developments and that real progress has been made in Africa towards good governance, through transparent and fair elections, and through the establishment of the rule of law with the strengthening of human rights and judicial independence.

The good news continues. Political power changes hands, new elites, in turn, take power: these are signs that African societies are regaining their health.

The international community must lend its support to those efforts, helping Africa to recover lost ground so that it can achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. We are convinced that real progress will be achieved at next September's summit. We take this opportunity to welcome all the pledges made by the developed countries — which I will not cite here and make them feel uncomfortable, as some of them are present here in the Council — so that, at the September summit, Africa will benefit from a boost that will help rescue it.

Mr. President, your country too, in cooperation with others, has contributed an important stone to that building, working to eliminate hunger — the "zero hunger" proposal of your country's President — and to find ongoing financial resources for development. Those efforts continue today.

I would like to conclude on that optimistic note at a time when the winds of reform are sweeping this glass tower. We hope that the reform will be well directed in order not to weaken its foundations.

The President: I thank the representative of Morocco for his kind words addressed to my Government, to me and to my country, Brazil.

I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, at the outset I would like to express our appreciation for the initiative you have taken in calling this meeting at the end of your Council presidency. It demonstrates your interest in transparency and your desire to work efficiently with all members and non-members of the Council in the discharge of the Council's responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Sir, your choice of "the African dimension in the work of the Security Council" as a topic amply demonstrates the need for an objective discussion of the Council's performance when grappling with African issues. This fact, in addition to the meetings that you held with countries contributing troops to peacekeeping operations, shows your keen interest and that of the Council in following the rules of transparency and accountability and in enhancing the responsibility and representative character of the Council, along with the other main organs of the United Nations. This should improve their performance within a framework that achieves the desired efficiency and observes the requisite balance between their mandates, in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

An in-depth look into the African issues that the Council discussed this month, and the measures it adopted in dealing with them, reveals a number of essential dimensions that the delegation of Egypt would like to focus on in this brief statement.

First, the Security Council should exert greater efforts to absorb the complexities of conflicts in the continent and accord more attention to dealing with the root causes of these conflicts, avoiding the narrow vision based on historic reasons or political relations. It should take into account socio-economic, cultural and ethnic dimensions as an integral part of efforts to tackle the problems of the African continent.

Secondly, it is important for the Security Council to support the role of regional and subregional organizations in Africa as they grapple with the variety of problems there. It should also strengthen the role of regional gatherings as they seek to better understand the complexities of the African positions. This is particularly relevant, because since the establishment of the African Union Africa has made strides in fostering this role in an integrated endeavour that incorporates all political, security and socio-economic aspects.

Thirdly, the Council needs to perform its role in a more integrated framework, one that includes the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Secretariat, the United Nations organs and specialized agencies. It should take into account the requisite phased approach, from preventive measures through conflict management, to achieve peaceful settlement of disputes and post-conflict peace-building in a sequential and continuous framework. The Council should enhance this approach by paying field visits and holding decision-making meetings away from United Nations Headquarters. This is particularly evident after the success of the recent meetings held in Nairobi.

Fourthly, the Council should increase the chances for the success of peacekeeping operations — in accordance with agreed checks and balances — by supporting the efforts to bring peace to the African continent. In this connection, the Council's adoption of a resolution to establish a peacekeeping force in the Sudan is a good initiative to help that brotherly country to overcome the present bitter stage of conflict. The same applies to the Council's discussion of the security challenges that Somalia faces, and supporting national reconciliation there is another milestone upon which the Council should build, given the progress made by the Somalis themselves. This is in addition to the Council's consideration of the conflicts in Côte d'Ivoire and in Liberia in West Africa, and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi in Central Africa — an inclusive view that corresponds to the nature of these and other regional conflicts.

Egypt stresses its full support for the Security Council's efforts in these regions, including through the growing participation in peacekeeping operations there, the most recent of which is that of peacekeeping in Sudan.

Finally, I could not end my statement without emphasizing the need — even the inevitability — for the Council and the other main organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations to foster the role that the African Union could play in dealing with African

issues, including the settlement of African conflicts, in an atmosphere of cooperation and partnership. We should make use of this general debate to elaborate an integrated vision that would enable us to overcome the root causes of African conflicts in a framework that offers a guarantee of benefit from all proposals and visions designed to reinforce the Council's future treatment of African issues.

The President: I thank the representative of Egypt for his words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Pakistan, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Mr. President, I would like to congratulate you and the able Brazilian team for the skilful manner in which you have guided the Security Council this month. Let me also offer my felicitations to Ambassador Adechi on the outstanding Beninese presidency last month and convey my best wishes in advance to Ambassador Wang of China for a successful presidency next month.

Africa is sadly, but necessarily, a major preoccupation of the Security Council. Sir, we appreciate the thoughtful background paper you have circulated to facilitate today's discussion. During its Council presidency in May 2003, Pakistan convened a wrap-up session on conflicts in Africa, Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security. In May 2004, Pakistan organized a thematic debate on complex crises and United Nations response. Discussions in those two meetings were summarized and issued as documents of the Council. I am sure that the ideas and new proposals emanating from today's meeting will complement the vast information databank that is already available to the Council.

It is encouraging that the Security Council is continuously adapting its approach to the problems of Africa. Most of the situations in that continent are complex crises, with interlinking security, political, social, economic and humanitarian aspects. Many are also internal conflicts — armed rebellions or civil wars — although some situations involve outside interference and have cross-border or regional implications.

In the context of conflict prevention and avoidance of relapse, it is important to address the root causes. The list is long and diverse, but poverty and underdevelopment seem to be omnipresent. As we have said before, it is the politics of poverty and scarcity — or a scramble for resources, in the words of South Africa's Deputy Foreign Minister — which give rise to most of Africa's problems.

The Council's response in the conflict-management phase — peacekeeping — has been quite good. United Nations multidimensional peacekeeping operations correspond to the specific needs of complex situations by bringing together resources in military and a whole range of civilian fields. The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone was a crowning success whose experience is now being emulated in many other missions across Africa. Pakistan is proud to have been part of all of those peacekeeping operations.

I would like to say, in the context of certain current considerations, that in order to be effective, peacekeeping operations, especially in complex crises, must be well conceived and well planned, with competent management. They must be provided with the necessary human and material resources, a robust mandate to carry out wide-ranging functions, clear deployment and rules of engagement. This applies, in particular, to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). Its forces are operating under difficult circumstances. They have suffered casualties and have been engaged in intense firefights. MONUC and its forces require the full support of the Security Council and its membership.

The Security Council has just authorized the establishment of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS). We welcome that decision, which we hope will contribute to long-term peace and stability in that great country. UNMIS will be a big challenge, considering the scale of the operation and its duration, besides other complicating factors. In that perspective, we hope that the Security Council will give serious thought to the compatibility of a cooperative United Nations peace operation with the policy of sanctions.

The need for regional or subregional approaches has also been recognized, due to the cross-cutting nature of the problems and the desirability of comprehensive solutions. The increased interaction and coordination between contiguous peacekeeping operations is welcome. We are also encouraged by the growing cooperation of the Security Council with the African Union and several subregional organizations.

Harmonious and coordinated policies add to the effectiveness of Security Council decisions and actions.

In the context of the regional approach, the Security Council should, in our view, also focus on the Horn of Africa in a more coherent way, as it has done in the cases of West and Central Africa.

We cannot fail to mention another test case here: Somalia, which, over the years, despite being on the agenda of the Security Council, has not benefited from the kind of political support that it so desperately needs and which only the United Nations can provide. In particular, the recent progress in the Somali peace process offers yet another opportunity which should be fully seized. Somali efforts and those of the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development must receive the necessary backing and support of the United Nations and, in particular, of the Security Council.

We welcome the intention of the Secretary-General to appoint a special representative to lead the expanded United Nations role in Somalia. The Council should also play its rightful role in that context.

In the case of post-conflict situations, managing the transition from conflict to long-term development and preventing relapse into conflict have also gained greater attention at the United Nations. The recognition of the inextricable link between peace and development has opened the window for increased cooperation and coordination between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. We expect that relationship to develop further in an institutionalized way.

While Sierra Leone was an example of successful peacekeeping, Guinea-Bissau, in our view, could be a reference point — or a test case of the combined efforts of the Security Council and Economic and Social Council for peacebuilding. As we know, much more needs to be done to ensure the success of that combined effort. For peacebuilding, the key challenge, among other issues, remains the mobilization of sustained and adequate international support, including funding and resources.

The discussion today on the African dimension in the work of the Security Council has highlighted the need for a system-wide response, based on greater coordination and synergy among the principal organs of the United Nations. In that regard, the proposal of a peacebuilding commission has evoked considerable interest within the general United Nations membership. In its country-specific operations, the proposed commission would need to embrace Pakistan's concept of ad hoc composite committees.

While several aspects of the proposal need to be worked out, we feel that the idea offers a real opportunity to promote a truly comprehensive approach to the issues of peace and development. It should not be merely a mechanism to fill the gap between conflict and post-conflict situations. We believe the commission should focus on all stages of conflict. It should serve as a mechanism for early engagement of the international community with situations that risk sliding towards conflict. Good offices and other mechanisms for pacific settlement and conflict avoidance could be utilized, as appropriate, under the framework of the commission. It should promote development as the best means to prevent conflict and should address abuses of international humanitarian law and human rights in order to prevent conflict.

With the concurrence of the Governments concerned, assistance can be provided in pre-conflict stages: in the governance, economic and social recovery, human rights and humanitarian fields. In that way, the United Nations as a whole can join together in addressing and overcoming the challenges which face developing countries of Africa and several other developing countries at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

The President: I thank the representative of Pakistan for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Mayoral (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): To begin, the Argentine delegation would like to congratulate the delegation of Brazil and to thank it for proposing today's topic. We believe that selecting the topic of the African dimension in the work of the Security Council was extremely appropriate, considering the number and importance of African items on the international agenda and the need for the international community to understand the need to resolve those problems. This meeting gives us the opportunity to take an overview of the Security Council's consideration of African topics and to take a fresh look at the problems and characteristics that are shared by those conflicts.

In our view, today's debate should serve as an opportunity to state that the entire United Nations, not just the Security Council, must tackle the conflicts in Africa in an integrated manner that takes into consideration, in a coordinated manner, not only the important security dimension but also the equally important humanitarian and developmental dimensions.

Our experience with the recurrence of conflicts that have long been on the Council's agenda and the many dimensions of those conflicts should lead us to take more creative and more inclusive approaches. In many situations, the underlying economic, social and political conditions which aggravated, or ever gave rise to, a particular conflict remain throughout the duration of military operations, only to reappear full-strength once the armed conflict seems to be on the way to resolution.

We understand that the Security Council's pivotal task under the Charter of working towards the maintenance of international peace and security cannot be fully effective unless we carry out, in parallel with those efforts, activities in the post-conflict phase, or even as a crisis winds down, that are aimed at erecting bulwarks against any resurgence of such conflict. We believe that such bulwarks should include, among other things, practical steps in the areas of development and reconstruction, human rights, he rule of law and democracy.

A concern for the multidimensional nature of many conflicts, in particular in Africa, is nothing new, either in the Council or in the system as a whole. The creation of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, as well as the existence of parallel groups in the Council and in the Economic and Social Council charged with considering the situation of specific countries in the post-conflict phase, are clear evidence of the fact that we understand the multiple dimensions of many conflicts.

Similarly, the integration of various dimensions in peacekeeping missions established by the Council is nothing new either. Over the past three years, the concept of integrated missions has provided a tool whose military component is enhanced by the humanitarian element. Peacekeeping missions in Africa demonstrate the practical realization of this approach. The Council's work in areas such as the protection of civilians and the situation of women and children in armed conflict also bears witness to the fact that the Council has integrated new dimensions in its efforts to promote peace and security.

However, despite all of those initiatives, the resurgence of certain conflicts in Africa seems to indicate that the efforts made to date have not been sufficient and that we must make greater efforts and take new steps that will enable us to address conflicts in an integrated manner in order to consolidate the hard-won peace.

In the humanitarian area, the United Nations system has been involved in an important debate on the question of the transition from assistance to development. Similarly, we believe that the time has come to create new structures that would address, in an integrated manner, the situation of countries emerging from conflict.

In discussing such mechanisms, the role played by the Security Council will be pivotal and should be stressed, bearing in mind the fact that, in the absence of a suitable security framework, it is virtually impossible to take the basic steps required in important areas such as development and reconstruction, human rights, rule of law, democracy and protection of natural resources.

In that context, we believe that the proposal set out in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom" to the effect that a Peacebuilding Commission be set up provides a solid basis for a discussion of a new mechanism that appears at this point to be indispensable.

We believe that, for this proposal to be viable, the mechanism must have a mandate and a capacity that are institutionally appropriate. In the early post-conflict phases in particular, the Security Council must be able to rely, at the systemic level, on adequate assistance from the funds and programmes, and, at the financial level, on an effective and flexible funding mechanism that makes it possible at all times to monitor the use of resources.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened today's meeting. We wish also to congratulate you and your delegation for the outstanding manner in which you have been presiding over the work of the Council this month.

African issues have consistently taken up a large share of the agenda of the Security Council. This

month the Council held in-depth discussions on Somalia, Burundi, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other African items.

It is particularly gratifying that last week the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1590 (2005) on the deployment of United Nations peacekeepers in southern Sudan. This demonstrates once again the Security Council's level of attention and input vis-à-vis the conflicts in Africa.

In recent years the African situation has witnessed some gratifying positive developments, and some long, drawn-out conflicts have gradually subsided. However, as the Secretary-General said in his consolidated report to the General Assembly, most regions in Africa are still suffering from the devastating effects of armed conflict, poverty and disease. Of the 24.6 million internally displaced persons in the world, half live in Africa.

In carrying out its responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council should give African issues careful and particular attention.

First, the Security Council should strongly urge the international community to intensify its focus on African issues, and also urge members to demonstrate greater political will and provide additional resources.

Secondly, the Security Council should continue to place African items at the top of its agenda. It should give greater play to the role of the African Union and other African regional and subregional organizations, carefully heed their views and proposals, enhance their coordination and cooperation on the ground, and assist them in capacity-building.

Thirdly, the Security Council should take an integrated approach to identifying effective ways of resolving African issues; enhance its coordination with peacekeeping operations and other United Nations agencies; and promote synergy to avoid any waste of resources.

Fourthly, the Security Council should devote even greater attention to post-conflict reconstruction efforts on the part of the countries concerned. The Secretary-General's report recommends the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission; this is an innovative idea that merits further consideration by the Security Council.

In brief, we believe that the Security Council should continuously take stock of its experience in considering African issues in order to enhance its work, so that its decisions can better meet the actual needs of African countries and make solid contributions to resolving African conflicts.

Mr. Oshima (Japan): Mr. President, my delegation thanks you for the initiative you have taken to convene this important and timely meeting to wrap up your presidency, and I wish at the same time to congratulate you on your effective handling of the business of the Council during the current month.

Issues related to Africa continue, unfortunately, to be a major preoccupation of the Security Council, as demonstrated, for example, by the fact that an overwhelming majority of United Nations peacekeepers and related financial resources are dedicated to Africa. And the work of the Council this month has been no exception. It is therefore important that we focus our attention at this meeting on how the Council can effectively and efficiently address issues related to Africa, bearing in mind both the regional perspective and the aspects of specific conflicts and situations. I would like to make a couple of brief points in that regard.

First, we have said that the notion of African ownership should be emphasized and supported as an important guiding principle in addressing many Africa-related issues that the Council is called upon to deal with. We are encouraged that African ownership is increasingly accepted by Africans themselves and supported by the international community. It is increasingly finding its clear and robust expression in, for example, the important roles played by African regional and subregional organizations.

That has clearly become the trend in a number of conflict resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding situations, as shown by initiatives of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in the north-south peace negotiations in the Sudan, by the African Union mission in Darfur, by the African Union engagement — in particular through President Mbeki's mediation effort — in Côte d'Ivoire, by the effort of the Economic Community of West African States with regard to the situation in Togo, and so on.

That is very welcome, and not only must it be encouraged, but also, where support is needed, such support — moral and political as well as financial and

material — should be extended as much as possible by the international community. At the same time, ways should be found to develop closer pragmatic working relationships and institutional linkages between the United Nations and key African regional organizations, in particular the African Union.

In that regard, resolution 1590 (2005) regarding the Sudan, adopted last week, is the latest good example. That resolution requires the Secretary-General to report on how the United Nations Mission in the Sudan can, through appropriate assistance to the African Union Mission, reinforce the efforts to foster peace in Darfur. We look forward to the Secretary-General's report with great interest and stand ready to actively discuss the matter in the Security Council in the weeks to come.

Furthermore, we understand that the African Union is exploring the possibility of sending troops to contribute to the peace processes both in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Somalia — which, if it materializes, will be another initiative that reinforces the African sense of ownership. We hope that the Council and the African Union will further enhance their cooperation and coordination in that regard so that the African Union will be able to play greater roles in addressing the problems that Africa faces, with, when required, the necessary assistance from the international community.

The second point I wanted to make is that there is a need to promote inter-mission synergies and cooperation among the various United Nations missions deployed in Africa. We note with interest that cooperation and linkages are being developed among various peacekeeping operations that have in recent years been deployed in the same subregion of Africa, as, for example, in coordinated patrols between the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) along the borders and in periodic high-level talks between those two missions aimed at addressing their common problems. In West Africa, several United Nations missions deployed in that subregion have initiated the practice of sharing logistical assets and materials through their inter-mission coordination mechanism.

Such inter-mission linkages in Africa should be further strengthened, and we hope that a systematic review of the operational concepts of the various peace missions deployed in the subregion will be conducted. My delegation referred to that suggestion at the open meeting held earlier this week to discuss the situation in Côte d'Ivoire (see S/PV.5152). Similar inter-mission linkages could also be explored in, for example, Sierra Leone, through an arrangement that will allow forces of the United Nations Mission in Liberia to be made deployable across the western border of Liberia to provide a security stopgap measure that the withdrawal of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone may require in the coming months. With greater integration and inter-mission synergies, flexible and more effective use of the operational assets and resources of various deployed missions will become possible, to the advantage of all — and also possibly to save on mission costs.

The ideas suggested in the report of the Secretary-General of 2 March 2005 on inter-mission cooperation in West Africa (S/2005/135) should also be explored with regard to the missions operating in other subregions, such as MONUC, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and ONUB, in Burundi. We encourage the Secretariat to explore such a possibility with the cooperation of the countries contributing troops to those missions.

The President: I thank the representative of Japan for the kind words he addressed to me.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): I should like to align myself with the remarks to be made shortly by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union.

Tony Blair said recently that Africa is a scar on the conscience of the world. Its poverty and stagnation represent one of the greatest tragedies of our time. In the view of the United Kingdom, they demand a response not just by the Council, but by the United Nations as a whole, by Africa and, essentially, by all of us.

The good news is that Africa itself is creating a stronger foundation for tackling its own problems; recent improvements in economic growth and governance reflect that. We can only welcome and salute the efforts of the African Union on concepts like the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the work of the subregional organizations in Africa.

But I believe that the prescription for tackling the myriad problems in Africa includes the following. There should be governance-building and capacity-building, but there should also be peace and security so that we can tackle all aspects of the conflict spectrum. Crucially, there must be sufficient investment in people, health, education and sanitation. We must tackle the whole question of disease, including HIV/AIDS and simpler illnesses such as measles, which will kill 300,000 children this year. We must ensure that we provide the wherewithal for growth and for poverty reduction and that trade liberalization takes place. The Secretary-General's report (A/59/2005) has challenged us all to produce quota-free access, for example, for all the least developed countries, which has already been done by the European Union. Trade liberalization and fairer trade are at the heart of it. And we must provide the investment — again, the wherewithal — to ensure that Africa's resources can be used by Africans for the benefit of Africans. That prescription is set out much more eloquently in the report of the Commission for Africa, entitled *Our Common Interest*, than I have stated it. It is a frank assessment of where we are, of how we got there and especially of what is possible.

The good news for Africa is that 2005 is the crucial year. The rendezvous that we all have — the high-level meeting in September — probably offers more possible gain to Africa than to any other continent, and it is right that it should. Of course, our hope is that the package set out by the Secretary-General will offer gains and advantages to all of us and that it will be very much to the benefit of the United Nations as a whole to put that package in place. But Africa's interest in the summit and in seeing a very successful Group of Seven/Group of Eight (G-7/G-8) process this year — for which the United Kingdom, as Chair of the G-7, has made Africa one of its two priority areas — emphasizes why, this year, we have to make a real difference in Africa.

I should like to set out my conditions for successful intervention in Africa. First, there should be coherence of policy: we should tackle the whole range of aspects, whether it be the various aspects of conflict, economic development, institution-building, democracy, the whole essence of peacebuilding or sustainable economic development and progress. That is what we need to have. The peacebuilding commission is a welcome addition to our armoury to move forward, but it is quite clear that we need coherent policy.

Secondly, we need coherence of intervention by the entire United Nations family. As we deliver United Nations services on the ground, it has to be done without duplication and in a way that is mutually reinforcing of the aggregate United Nations effort.

Thirdly, that effort must be coherent with the other efforts being made by Africans, the African Union, regional organizations and all the other international players, be they the international financial institutions, bilateral donors or anyone else. We need a far greater coherence between us and, as we all muster that intervention, we need to take account of regional aspects within Africa so that we do not unwittingly, in doing one thing in one country, create consequences that may not have been foreseen, to the disadvantage of another country. So what we need to do is harness synergies on a regional basis and make sure that there are no disadvantages to other countries.

In all that, it seems to me that, of course, the drive has to come from Africans and be led by Africans, that the lead in an individual country situation should be taken by the country concerned, and that the rest of us must play our part. The discussion we had yesterday on Guinea-Bissau just demonstrates why we need to do that, but we need to do it in a joined-up fashion that takes advantage of the good things happening in Africa and of this year's opportunities. We also need to make sure that it is a responsibility not just of this Council — and that is why I deliberately broadened my intervention — but of all of us to do this collectively. The Security Council has a pivotal role, but it has no exclusivity. We all have to play our part.

Mr. Duclos (France) (*spoke in French*): My delegation wishes to associate itself with the comments to be made on behalf of the European Union by the Ambassador of Luxembourg.

My delegation thanks you, Sir, for your initiative of organizing today's debate on African issues. We welcome that initiative for three reasons.

First, the Council's activity has largely been focused on African issues. That was demonstrated this month as we discussed Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Burundi, Somalia and the Sudan,

concerning which we have taken important decisions and expect to take yet another tomorrow. What was true in March also applies to the rest of the year. I must say, somewhat sadly, that we would of course prefer that the Council did not have so frequently to address the crises that continue to afflict that large and friendly continent.

Secondly, cooperation between the Security Council and African regional organizations is growing. Africans today are taking control of their fate. The African Union is now a necessary partner in the settlement of crises on the continent, and we are very gratified by that development. That also holds true for such regional organizations as the Economic Community of West African States and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

It is therefore quite appropriate and desirable for our Council and those organizations to work closely together. France is convinced that such cooperation is a guarantee of effectiveness. That was demonstrated two days ago when the Council took cognizance of the South African mediation in the Côte d'Ivoire crisis. It was also demonstrated with respect to Somalia when the Council brought all its support to bear on IGAD's outstanding efforts. Naturally, all such cooperation must be undertaken with respect for everyone's competencies.

Thirdly, the Council has established many peacekeeping operations in Africa. Today, the majority of the 65,000 Blue Helmets deployed throughout the world are in Africa. It is therefore up to the Council to bring all its weight to bear on the settlement of crises to which the United Nations is committed.

The international community's resources are not unlimited. The number of peacekeepers deployed in the field cannot grow indefinitely. That is why the Council, in close cooperation with the Africans, must in each case define a genuine exit strategy. In some cases, however — in Côte d'Ivoire in particular — an additional but temporary investment is sometimes indispensable if it will help to solve the crisis any sooner. In all cases, the Council must have a comprehensive and long-term perspective of its commitments in a given crisis.

I am compelled to raise a question that affects all of us: the campaign against sexual abuse in peacekeeping operations. Attention has been focused on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but our collective efforts must go far beyond that. Prince Zeid's report is a very useful contribution in that regard. It should help us to combat that scourge.

In conclusion, I recall that several United Nations soldiers have been killed or seriously injured this month in Africa in the exercise of their duties. That sacrifice reflects the ongoing commitment of those peacekeeping soldiers in Africa and elsewhere. I pay tribute to them and commend the courage and dedication of all those who are serving peace under the Council's mandate.

The President: I call on the representative of Luxembourg.

Mr. Bichler (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania; the candidate countries Turkey and Croatia; the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro; and the European Free Trade Association countries, Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, associate themselves with this statement.

The European Union thanks you, Sir, for organizing today's debate, which has enabled us to focus on the African dimension of the Security Council's work. This month, the Security Council has addressed African issues virtually every day. Unfortunately, there are good reasons for that. Large parts of Africa remain in the grip of armed conflicts, compromising the long-term stability of the entire continent, not to mention the unjustifiable suffering that such conflicts inflict on its peoples. The great majority of the more than 65,000 people working in United Nations peacekeeping operations are deployed in Africa. A new mission is being deployed to the Sudan, while others are to be reinforced or approved in the near future.

The European Union believes that fostering lasting peace and security in Africa — prerequisites for lasting economic and social development — is one of the major tasks of the international community in general and of the Security Council in particular. We attach great importance to our multidimensional partnership with Africa and with its people. At their 22-23 March meeting at Brussels, the heads of State or

Government placed emphasis on the special importance of Africa in 2005.

The Security Council bears primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Its important contribution to peace and security in Africa would certainly be enhanced by increased cooperation and coordination within the partnerships forged among the United Nations, the European Union, the African Union and subregional organizations with regard to the prevention, resolution and management of conflicts and of their root causes. New flexible partnership models have already proven most valuable in that regard, as evidenced by the African missions to Burundi and to the Sudan.

Moreover, the European Union believes that, in addition to partnerships and practical cooperation, institutional links between the United Nations and the African Union should be strengthened, especially in the sphere of peace and security. In view of the great number of conflicts in Africa and their increasing complexity, such institutional links could optimize the effectiveness of the international community's efforts by making use of the comparative advantages of regional and subregional organizations and of their complementarity vis-à-vis the United Nations system. Here, the European Union is pleased that in a 19 November 2004 presidential statement (S/PRST/2004/44), the Security Council invited the Secretary-General to explore new means of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union.

Less than three years after its creation, the African Union has made considerable progress as a credible and legitimate interlocutor for the continent of Africa and has gained the respect of the international community. The African Union has steadfastly shouldered its responsibilities as leader in addressing some of the numerous armed conflicts that Africa has long had to endure. That determination is illustrated by its recent efforts to stabilize the situation in Darfur.

As a direct extension of the presidential statement of 20 July 2004 (S/PRST/2004/27) on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in stabilization processes, the European Union is firmly resolved to strengthen its dialogue with the African Union, to forge institutional ties and to formulate an operational programme, especially as regards peace and security.

In November 2004 the European Union adopted an action plan for support to peace and security in Africa, which sets out practical ways and means to help African organizations establish their own capacity for the prevention and management of conflict. In addition to human and financial support, the European Union has provided logistical, technical and political support to most peace and mediation processes in Africa. Military observers of States members of the European Union are participating in all United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa, and we provide support to a number of peacekeeping missions approved and led by the African Union or by subregional organizations. To expedite financial support for such operations, and at the request of the African Union, the European Union created the Peace Support Operation Facility for Africa, a development mechanism funded in the amount of €200 million and fully operational since June 2004.

Let me conclude by making brief mention of four specific areas where the European Union believes the Security Council should act quickly and resolutely to prevent the prolongation of armed conflicts and of human suffering. First, there is a need to put an end to impunity. Secondly, arms embargoes must be more scrupulously respected. Thirdly, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons must be combated. And finally, programmes of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration must be effectively supported.

While responsibility for progress in Africa lies first and foremost with the leaders and peoples of the continent, I repeat that the European Union advocates strengthened relations and broadened partnerships among the United Nations, the African Union and subregional organizations, especially in the spheres of international peace and collective security. For its part, the European Union is prepared to enhance its relations with the African Union with a view to establishing a true strategic and institutional partnership based on the principles of Africa's ownership of its own destiny, full and complete cooperation, equality and legitimacy.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Indonesia, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Percaya (Indonesia): My delegation would like to express its appreciation to you, Mr. President, for having convened this wrap-up meeting. We are particularly gratified that an appropriate theme — the African dimension in the work of the Security

Council — has been chosen for the wrap-up. Indeed, this month the focus of the Council's programme of work has been heavily African, reflecting the desire of the Council to ensure that peace and security reign there.

Indonesia is very supportive of this process and encourages the Council not to relent in its efforts. We must always be cognizant of the fact that the first requirement for development is peace. In working hard for peace in Africa, the Council is also offering a determined and highly desired investment in its development. In that connection, we are pleased to encourage continued cooperation between the Council and the African Union and subregional organizations in Africa.

Considering that this month alone the Council took up agenda items that encompassed the United Nations Mission in the Sudan, the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the Monitoring Group on Somalia, among other matters — in addition to a large number of briefings, reports and statements concerning an assortment of African conflicts — it is easy to see how heavy the work load is. In that connection, the Council's efforts to foster peace on the continent deserve commendation.

The delegation of Indonesia holds it as a strong principle that the cause of democracy and development in Africa, which ties in with the Council's focus on peace and security, must be rigorously pursued. By focusing on lessons learned concerning conflicts and the failure of ceasefires and of some peace efforts, the United Nations can turn challenging situations in Africa into celebrated successes. Needless to say, by helping to secure and sustain peace, the Council will be leading the way in that respect.

In view of the fact that many of the issues that concern Africa are cross-linked, it is the desire of my delegation to see that this kind of cooperation exists also between Africa and other major organs of the United Nations. It would be recalled that two years ago in the General Assembly, Member States warmly welcomed the New Partnership for Africa's Development with pledges of support for its development.

Only this month, in his report entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all", Secretary-General Kofi Annan observed that sub-Saharan Africa was "falling seriously short" (*A/59/2005, p. 11*) on most of the Millennium Development Goals. It is important that the kind of focus that the Security Council has dedicated to Africa this month continue within the international community, in order to ensure that development progress picks up throughout the continent.

For its part, Indonesia has been involved with the development and other dreams of Africa for a long time. After all these years, we have remained committed to peace and progress in the continent. That is reflected in our continuing contribution of peacekeepers, most recently to MONUC.

Before concluding, I would like to note that Indonesia treasures the relationship that it has with Africa. Almost 50 years have passed since the 1955 Asian-African Conference took place in Bandung. As that expression of cooperation and solidarity among countries of the developing South matures into its second half-century, Indonesia will be hosting, next month in Bandung and Jakarta, a number of anniversary events. Through those events, we hope to restate Asia's solidarity with Africa, as well as our close identification with the problems of African nations, most of which attained independence after Bandung.

Finally, my delegation would like to reiterate how important it is for this wrap-up meeting, if it is to be meaningful, to be followed up by a short and accurate report detailing the general and specific concerns of delegations, and containing recommendations for action. That would be the only way to prevent it from turning into a meaningless ritual.

The President: I thank the representative of Indonesia for his kind words addressed to me.

I would also like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Council, to extend our condolences with respect to the recent earthquake in Indonesia, which saddened us all very much. I request the representative of Indonesia to convey to his Government that expression of condolence.

Mr. Zinsou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): We would like to express our gratitude to you, Mr. President, for having organized this open debate on the African dimension in the work of the Security Council.

Although it comes as no surprise, the fact that you have taken this initiative does you credit.

The objectives of the Organization as set out in the Charter can be summarized as peace, freedom and development. It was therefore only logical that, once the United Nations was established, Africa should become a focus of its activities. But, in particular, Africa has also steadily been on the Council's agenda for several decades because of the many conflicts that have afflicted the countries of the continent since their independence, and it is those conflicts that are the main cause of the backwardness that characterizes the continent in various domains. A partnership for peace and security has thus developed between the African continent and the Council.

The Council has committed itself to seeking solutions to a number of African crises at various stages of development by mobilizing the instruments for intervention available to it, with varying degrees of success. The Council's activities have increased over time. The attention the Council devotes to African issues has increased tenfold. The search for solutions to African crises is carried out in a more systematic and prompt manner than in the past. Unfortunately, Africa provides tragic proof of how costly conflicts can be if they are resolved. That is why my delegation believes that the Council should do more to prevent conflict in Africa. The Security Council should therefore be proactive, rather than reactive.

The United Nations should look more closely at the underlying causes of conflict. In order to prevent conflict in Africa, greater attention should be paid to the best way in which to encourage democracy and good governance to take root in the countries of the continent. The United Nations, particularly the United Nations Development Programme, has an important role to play in that area. Responsibility for post-conflict reconstruction is, first and foremost, the responsibility of the World Bank and the African Development Bank — with, of course, the support of the African Union — as evidenced today in several African countries. Greater synergy with those institutions should be developed. A peacebuilding commission, as proposed by the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, would thus be entirely justified.

In addition to its devastating and wide-ranging impact directly on the African people, conflict also has indirect effects: the deterioration or destruction of health and education systems; the relentless spread of diseases, such as HIV; the abandonment of agriculture; the slowdown in economic growth and investment; massive violations of human rights.

The Council should be more active and more open to greater coordination and closer cooperation with other United Nations bodies, as necessary, and regardless of the stage at which United Nations intervention is decided upon. In that connection, we welcome the favourable developments that have transformed peacekeeping missions into multidimensional operations that respond more effectively to the increasingly complex character of the crises that they are addressing.

As a complement to its diplomatic efforts and the deployment of peacekeepers, the Council should refine the way in which it uses sanctions. It is true that the usefulness of that instrument has been demonstrated against UNITA in Angola and the Revolutionary United Front in Liberia; in those cases, the sanctions were targeted and the political goals clear-cut. Sanctions must continue to be assessed and monitored on a regular basis by the panel of independent experts. However, we should think more deeply about how to ensure greater respect for arms embargoes, in particular those on light weapons, as well as for individual sanctions aimed at drying up the sources of conflict. Wherever a United Nations operation is in place, it should contribute to ensuring that sanctions are enforced in an effective manner. Its mandate and rules of engagement should be formulated accordingly. Greater support should be provided for initiatives such as the moratorium of the Economic Community of West African States, which is being transformed into a convention; this could also contribute to the attainment of that goal. Experience with Council missions and international missions of inquiry shows how useful they can be, and we welcome the Council's intention to continue to use such tools.

With regard to interaction between the Council and regional African organizations, we must ensure coordination with regional conflict management machinery in Africa. Such coordination could be carried out through by means of regular reports on activities and networks for exchange of information, which would provide the Council with reliable and timely information to facilitate rapid decision-making.

When prevention efforts fail, we have a duty to protect civilians; nowhere is this more pressing than in Africa. People who are already suffering as a result of conflict and crisis should receive adequate international assistance to protect their right to life and to protect them from the violent actions of combatants. The Council should strive to speak with one voice when it comes to promoting international criminal justice as an effective tool to combat impunity. The Council must also give more sustained attention to forgotten crises. There should be closer coordination between the Council and non-governmental organizations that provide humanitarian assistance, even if it is necessary to maintain a clear separation of humanitarian assistance and military operations.

The Council must overcome a certain hesitation in taking courageous action to deter perpetrators of abuses against civilians. We should renounce a linear approach to managing post-conflict situations. Instead, we should promote a comprehensive approach linking conflict prevention and resolution to peacebuilding through a complete sequence of steps, because experience has shown that a linear approach leads to bottlenecks that entail real risks, as they reduce our ability to manage and take advantage of synergies to accelerate the normalization process. We should encourage the harmonious linking of the various steps of the international community's intervention in order to multiply the effectiveness of the resources employed. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes should be viewed as a lever to set in motion socio-economic changes that promote the development of a productive formal economy, thus assisting economic recovery and sustainable development.

The President: I thank the representative of Benin for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Baja (Philippines): Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, and your delegation for ably steering the presidency of the Council in an excellent fashion. We also commend the Brazilian presidency for convening this wrap-up meeting on the African dimension of the Council's work for March. The focus on Africa reflects the importance the Council attaches to its work on the continent. It is only fitting that we discuss African issues, since at least two thirds of the Council's work concerns Africa. This month alone, 19 of the 30 meetings scheduled in the monthly programme were related to Africa.

We have chosen three points to highlight work of the Council in Africa.

First, a significant part of the Coun involvement in Africa concerns peacekeep operations. We take this opportunity to acknowle the efforts of the Secretariat in promoting inter-miss cooperation, particularly in the context of the work the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in W Africa and Central Africa. The United Nations Miss in Sierra Leone, the United Nations Mission in Libe and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Iv continue to actively collaborate with one another, as do the United Nations Organization Mission in Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Uni Nations Operation in Burundi. Such inter-miss cooperation is necessary to rationalize and maxim the utilization of the assets on the ground.

Our second point concerns Security Coun action in Africa. Most of the issues in a country interlinked, and the approach to problems should be comprehensive as possible. For example, sin sanctions should be treated in the context of broader peace processes, political issues and sanctio issues should not be considered separately. As corollary to that, Council outputs, such as resolution should be as holistic as possible in scope.

In that connection, to share the views ju expressed by the representative of Benin, the history sanctions resolutions shows that they do not lead immediate and full compliance. There is always a g between the establishment of sanctions and the enforcement. The effectiveness of the Council's actio in that regard boils down to the question of respect f its authority, and that respect is diluted and t message becomes blurred when fault lines betwee members accompany a particular Council action.

Finally, I have some general comments on th situation in Africa to which the Security Counc should pay particular attention. There are two kinds death in Africa: on the one hand, there is death due machete wounds caused by militias and violations arms embargoes by Governments, and, on the othe there is death due to malaria, meningitis, measles an HIV/AIDS. The figures are staggering: 3.8 millio dead in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, million in the Sudan, 200,000 in Darfur, 100,000 northern Uganda, and so on. Thus, the nexus betwee

security and development is more pronounced in Africa than in any other region.

In considering African issues, the Security Council should bear in mind that the shape of the Africa it is trying to manage has, in large part been defined by colonialism. Boundaries were set without sufficient regard to the ethnic, cultural, tribal and other dynamics that exist on the ground. We believe that Council positions and its approach should therefore be part of a broad strategy of international diplomatic engagement and pressure, taking into consideration the historical and the current realities on the ground.

Mr. Konuzin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): African problems are a constant concern for the Security Council, reflecting the international community's deep concern at ongoing, difficult situations in Africa. We welcome the initiative of the Brazilian delegation in taking up the most timely items on the African agenda of the Security Council. We also welcome the participation in our meeting of non-members of the Council. We consider it to be an example of the Council's transparency.

Recent developments in Africa demonstrate that the best way to prevent internal conflicts is through strengthening the rule of law and developing democracy and good governance. The legitimate authorities of African States must be assured that neither their neighbours, the countries of the region nor the international community as a whole will support unconstitutional attempts to change Governments and/or help unlawful armed groups to achieve their political goals by breaking up States or destroying their economies.

In that connection, we welcome the recent decisive actions of the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States aimed at restoring constitutional order in Togo. That reaffirms once again that in many instances, regional and subregional organizations, which are closer to events, hold an advantage in warning of conflict situations and in their settlement.

With respect to the settlement of conflicts in Africa — and not just in Africa — I would like to stress the importance of consulting troop-contributing countries in order to improve the Council's decision-making process. It is no secret that we have difficulties when we consider items pertaining to modifications to peacekeeping mandates, their format and, especially, the size and number of forces. The most serious of those problems we now see in Côte d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In that work, we rely on the military expertise of the Secretariat. However, we would like to obtain the views and the appraisals of troop-contributing countries, whose contingents are directly involved in the area of operations. The current practice of conducting the relevant private meetings of the Security Council, in which the delegations of troop-contributing countries are usually very passive, is not fully justifiable. We propose that the possibility of coming back to this subject once again be considered, bearing in mind the Council's earlier decisions in this sphere.

The Council's consideration of current conflict situations in Africa shows that the greatest difficulties are connected with the settlement of problems during the transitional period. We have agreements on ceasefires or on peace, but they are not carried out. Transition governments are formed, but they systematically fall into disarray. Timetables are worked out for the political process, and they are not complied with. Implementation of legislative activity is slow; these are systematic violations of election deadlines, and programmes for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration are carried out with difficulty or blocked completely. Impunity gives rise to repeated massive violations of humanitarian law.

The phenomena to which I have referred are characteristic in various degrees of the situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Côte d'Ivoire, Sudan, Liberia, Burundi and other places. In such cases, the fragile situations in countries in conflict can once again deteriorate into open armed hostilities.

Obviously, the parties in conflict bear the primary responsibility for carrying out the agreements and related obligations. But the scale of the problem is such that considerable assistance is required from the international community. The task of the Security Council is to define the priorities clearly so that the broadest set of international factors — Member States, regional organizations, United Nations institutions, international donors, the business community and non-governmental organizations — with the United Nations coordinating, could be drawn into the solution to difficult problems during the transition period. Only through such a comprehensive and complex approach can we ensure the long-term solution to complex crises in Africa.

On another point, the Security Council and the entire international community should take a highly responsible approach to the implementation of sanctions. This has already been mentioned by several delegations today. In fact, we should also be cautious both in the choice of sanctions and in the timing and the targeting of their implementation. We should not forget that, once we have introduced a sanctions regime — in particular, an arms embargo — the Security Council must consider effective machinery to ensure its implementation so as not to harm the authority of the Council and of the United Nations as a whole. The Russian delegation gave its view on this matter in great detail in its explanation of vote on the Security Council resolution on Darfur yesterday.

The President: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the Gambia, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Grey-Johnson (Gambia): Mr. President, my delegation commends your initiative in convening this open meeting of the Council to discuss an issue of importance not only to Africa, but also to the membership of the United Nations. The African continent challenges the international system in many ways, not least through the many conflicts it has spawned over the years. Little wonder, therefore, that the Council has had to devote so much of its time to conflict, peace and security issues affecting Africa. It is therefore fitting that we pause to take stock and to decide on new ways forward.

The fact that there have been such frequent eruptions of conflict on the African continent is really a matter of concern. It is important to undertake a special analysis of the antecedents and causes of these conflicts in order to identify the common strands, with a view to addressing the causal factors at the root. It is true that there has been an ongoing debate on the broad causes of conflict globally. What is now required is an effort focused specifically on the peculiarities of the African scene, from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Côte d'Ivoire, to Sudan and elsewhere.

Some conflicts have been satisfactorily resolved, as was the case in Angola and Mozambique. Others have been stuck in a "no-war/no-peace" state of limbo, while yet others keep raging on. It is important to ascertain what the countries in each of these three categories have in common, with a view to drawing lessons that would help us prescribe more effecti antidotes to African conflicts.

From the outset, we must acknowledge th important initiatives taken by the Council, the effec of which on conflict situations have been very positiv The measures taken to curb the proliferation of sma arms and light weapons in West Africa stand out fo special mention. My delegation hopes to see thes measures strengthened even further, perhaps t culminate, ultimately, in an international conventio binding on all States.

The Council did collaborate well with th Economic Community of West African States i elaborating the small arms initiative. It did the same i mediating the situation in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoir Elsewhere in Africa, we have seen the tremendou promise that collaboration of this type with region and subregional bodies holds for conflict resolutio and peacekeeping. Perhaps this strategy should b employed more systematically, not only in resolvin conflicts, but also in peace-building and conflic prevention.

Post-conflict interventions need to be given mor attention. Programmes for disarming, demobilizing an reintegrating combatants have to be better conceived planned and resourced if they are to endure. I addition, consideration should be given to the need t evolve such programmes on a subregional basis, i recognition of the strong subregional dimensions o most conflicts in Africa.

The way certain conflict situations have erupte suggests that the Council should be more pro-active i its handling of emerging conflict situations. We mus strengthen our early warning systems and our respons capacities. Above all, the Council must be able t intervene to ward off conflicts before they flare up Ways must be found to engage adversaries in dialogu and negotiation before they slide into violence.

Finally, my delegation would like to see thi exercise undertaken on a regular basis to afford us a opportunity to evaluate our efforts in order to improv our impact and effectiveness in mediating conflicts o the African continent.

The President: I thank the representative of th Gambia for the kind words he has addressed to me.

I now give the floor to the representative o Somalia.

Mr. Hashi (Somalia): Mr. President, I wish to thank you for convening this wrap-up session on the African dimension in the work of the Security Council. We congratulate you and other Council members on this initiative, which shows the importance your delegation and your country attach to African issues. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the establishment of the Security Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, which serves as a useful forum to discuss conflict in Africa.

There has been a marked decline in inter-State wars, thanks to the realization that peaceful resolution of inter-State conflicts is in the long-term interest of the concerned States. The recognition of that by States that respect the norms of international law in inter-State relations has contributed to this decline. The Security Council's role in this regard is commendable.

On the other hand, the international community has witnessed a dramatic rise in the frequency of civil war, especially in Africa. There are some common denominators in the root causes of those conflicts. We will note a few of them: underdevelopment and poverty; inequitable sharing of power and national wealth; lack of good governance, leading in most cases to authoritarian rule and violations of human rights; the self-interested orientation of neighbouring States, which creates uncontrollable cycles of instability; and the flow of weapons and non-observance of sanctions, especially arms embargoes. Conflict situations like that in my own country, Somalia, can be averted if the international community addresses those and other issues in a timely and appropriate manner.

The international community has achieved considerable success in the resolution of some conflicts, while at the same time inexplicably failing with others. We acknowledge that the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security lies with the Security Council. However, we have to ask ourselves honest questions so that we can fully appreciate the human dimension of conflicts and not necessarily the strategic interests of States Members of the United Nations.

What does it take for the Security Council to be seriously seized of a conflict situation in Africa? What triggers Security Council action in conflict prevention and/or resolution? Is it the Council's obligation under the Charter to preserve international peace and security? Is it a question of humanitarian intervention, as in the case of my country, Somalia, during the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), at the height of the civil war and the famine? Must there be big power interests with historical links to the countries in conflict, or economic or other strategic considerations? Or must there be a combination of some or all of the issues I have just mentioned? Admittedly, there can be no uniform approach or an agreed-upon model. But I have raised these questions because the response of the Security Council in dealing with different conflicts in Africa varies.

Recent history has shown that when conflict resolution is sponsored by a State or a group of States, the chances of support for intervention in that conflict are enhanced. But what happens to a country when there is no major "sponsor", as is the case with my country? Let us take the example of Somalia. The United Nations estimates that 500,000 people have been killed during the civil war, that 1.5 million people have been internally displaced or are in refugee camps in neighbouring countries, and that 1.2 million are dispersed in the diaspora. That is a total of 3.2 million Somalis either dead, displaced, in refugees camps or part of the diaspora. How many more have to die or be displaced or dispersed before the Council becomes seriously engaged in a conflict like that of my country? I urge Council members to give serious consideration to this situation.

The other dynamic in addressing conflicts in Africa is the emerging role of regional and subregional organizations. Admittedly, an enhanced role for those organizations is welcome. The "Somalia-Rwanda syndrome" has contributed to those ad hoc arrangements, where regional and subregional organizations act under Chapter VIII of the Charter. In fact, fewer than half of all peacekeeping operations since 1997 have been undertaken by the United Nations; the majority of peacekeeping operations have been assumed by either regional or subregional organizations. There is a greater margin for success where regional actors set aside their varying interests in the conflict and agree — in a unified and cohesive manner — to resolve that conflict. The Economic Community of West African States is a good example of that.

However, as good as that may sound, there are certain constraints that severely limit the interventionist role of regional and subregional

organizations. Those include: lack of adequate military capacity for intervention in conflicts where peace-enforcement and peacekeeping are necessary; lack of adequate financial resources and logistical support; inadequate institutional capacity to engage in peace-enforcement and peacekeeping operations; conflicts of interest among States members of the regional or subregional organization; and lack of cooperation with sanctions regimes, in particular where arms embargoes are involved.

The African Union's efforts to create the capacities necessary for deployment in African conflicts must be supported and enhanced. The international community must put in place the resources necessary for the creation and strengthening of the capacities necessary for deployment in conflict areas of Africa.

I urge the Security Council to address all conflicts with equal attention. I trust that the Council will continue its primary task of preserving peace and security.

The President: I thank the representative of Somalia for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Fendrick (United States of America): As a general rule, my delegation is somewhat sceptical of the value of holding general thematic debates in the Security Council, preferring instead to focus the Council's attention where it is likely to have the greatest immediate impact on specific situations that represent threats to the maintenance of international peace and security. That said, there have been thematic debates in the past — such as those focused on the threat posed by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, those related to women, peace and security and those related to the rule of law — that have been time truly well spent for the Council. My delegation hopes that today's debate will be remembered as another that was genuinely worth holding.

Africa commands a disproportionate amount of the Security Council's time and attention. The peacekeeping missions that the Council has mandated for that continent consume the bulk of the United Nations funds made available under the peacekeeping assessment. It is manifestly in the interest of the United Nations membership — both the African States hosting peacekeeping operations and the other States that are providing the funding and personnel for those operations — that we, as members of the Security Council, do everything possible to ensure that all resources, human and financial, are budgeted wisely and used effectively.

The challenges Africa faces are multidimensional, requiring multidimensional responses. In the African States where the United Nations is most heavily engaged and invested — Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and, increasingly, the Sudan — the norm is severely limited or crumbling infrastructure; crippling humanitarian problems involving refugees, internally displaced persons and other vulnerable populations; weakened or collapsed governance mechanisms; and, far too often, a culture of impunity.

In the face of those daunting realities, the greatest strength of those States is the resilience of their peoples and their collective desire for peace, sustainable development and access to democratic political processes, reconciliation and justice. Helping the peoples of those troubled States achieve their political and economic goals should be the guiding principle of the Council's work.

There are a number of ways in which the Security Council is currently addressing the challenges facing Africa. Our efforts will always be a combination of sticks and carrots. Sometimes the threat of imposing sanctions is enough to change the behaviour of individuals or entities acting against the cause of peace. Too often, however, individuals do not take advantage of the opportunity to reverse sanctionable behaviour. In those cases, the Council must be willing to impose sanctions promptly and to bring sufficient political pressure to bear on all relevant States and parties to make the sanctions effective. To date, the Council's record in that area is mixed, at best.

Our experiences in Africa, particularly in West Africa and in the Great Lakes region, have consistently highlighted the regional dimension of many of the ongoing conflicts on the continent. The Council and the Secretariat have been exploring ways to tackle regional problems more coherently. If we are able to develop regional strategies, we may be able to reverse the disturbing flows of people, weapons, conflict and misery across international borders.

Effective regional strategies could result in genuine good-neighbourliness, with positive flows of legitimate trade replacing illicit exploitation of resources. We clearly have much work to do in this

regard, both in the Council itself and in cooperation with regional and subregional organizations.

Engaging regional and subregional organizations will help the international community intervene in Africa in a fashion that makes local buy-in and ownership much more probable. With that local ownership comes a greater likelihood of mission success — our shared objective. The importance of developing the capacities of regional and subregional organizations to deploy both civilian and military assets quickly cannot be overstated. My own country has been involved in a number of such programmes, including the African Contingency Operations Training Assistance (ACOTA) programme, the African Regional Peacekeeping programme, and the Global Peacekeeping Operations Initiative (GPOI). Training regional and subregional organizations is a wise investment that will allow those organizations to become force multipliers in an era when demands on finite resources will continue to grow.

Another area where the Council and other United Nations and other international bodies need to focus attention is the problem of preventing national recidivism, where States emerge from conflict only to fall back again as the attention of the international community shifts elsewhere. The High-level Panel's recommendation to establish a Peacebuilding Commission deserves careful study. Peacekeeping is simply too expensive and too dangerous an undertaking to be done without a well-thought-out and carefully structured process for determining what comes next when the peacekeepers successfully complete their mandates.

The immediate post-conflict period in any State is the period that holds both the greatest promise and the greatest risk. States emerging from conflict typically have a surplus of combatants and weapons and a critical shortage of opportunities for education and normal economic activity. Successful disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes are the single most critical element of the post-conflict period. The Council, the donor community, the United Nations specialized funds and programmes, and the seeds of civil society in post-conflict States need to harmonize their efforts if DDR is to replace fighting with learning, thievery with gainful employment, and political chaos with constitutional order.

The challenges facing Africa remain enormous, but I think that our work this month on the Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Liberia and Somalia — under your skilful leadership, Mr. President — has demonstrated that the Council's willingness to tackle these challenges is also enormous. The people of Africa deserve no less.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): Mr. President, I wish to express our appreciation to you, to your colleagues and to your country for putting the item on the African dimension in the work of the Security Council high on our agenda.

Today's discussion will enrich our perspective by enabling us to hear views from the broader membership of the United Nations. It will allow us to make observations and draw conclusions which will have a positive effect on the outcome of the work of the Council.

Greece fully aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union.

During the month of March, as it had done previously, the Security Council continued to discuss many issues pertaining to peace and security in several African countries. This shows clearly the genuine concern that the Security Council has for Africa.

At the same time, unfortunately, it proves also that significant parts of Africa continue to be affected by armed conflict. In certain parts conflict has only recently ceased, and in others the situation is so precarious that it might lead to conflict. Africa has indeed been at the centre of the Security Council's attention and action.

It could be useful to describe very briefly some of the cases in order to emphasize their common characteristics and to draw lessons that could contribute not only to an improvement in the work of the Security Council, but also to a better approach to resolving the issues.

No one should doubt the serious concern of the members of the Security Council as regards the Sudan, the largest country in Africa, where a two-decades-long war has claimed the lives of more than 2 million

people. The adoption of the resolution authorizing the deployment of a United Nations Mission of more than 10,000 people represents a positive contribution to the effective implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of Nairobi. It also gives rise to real hope that this agreement will serve as a model for the settlement of the conflict in Darfur. The continuation of the crisis in Darfur led the Council to adopt further measures to be taken if the parties do not comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions. The issue of impunity for crimes committed in Darfur is also of paramount importance.

In the case of Ethiopia and Eritrea, the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) gave the Security Council the opportunity to address the stalemate in the settlement of the differences between the two countries.

In the case of Côte d'Ivoire, the Security Council decided to reinforce the arms embargo. Individual sanctions have not yet been put into effect, in order to give the African Union's mediation effort time to bear fruit. With the security situation deteriorating, there is a strong feeling among Council members that individual sanctions should become effective.

The Security Council earlier adopted a resolution on the Democratic Republic of the Congo arms embargo in order to better define and strengthen its scope and implementation. It is unfortunate that the embargo is systematically being violated and that there is still no consensus with regard to the different elements that could contribute to achieving its effective and thorough implementation.

Most often the problems tackled by the Security Council have regional and even global dimensions, yet almost all of them affect Africa disproportionately. Greece is of the opinion, therefore, that the Security Council should continue to pay particular attention to these issues. In trying to resolve these problems, some common trends should be considered. The Security Council should take into consideration those that emerge from our work concerning Africa, which include the following.

First, the African Union (AU) has emerged as a reliable and active player. This is an encouraging factor that has already proved extremely helpful in the work of the Security Council. We commend the African Union for its actions. It has emerged as a true partner for peace, assuming responsibility and on numerous occasions exercising leadership in dealing with the many conflicts that have affected Africa.

In the context of regional organizations, I would like to emphasize the very important role that the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is playing in the West African region. Equally important is the role of other regional organizations in other parts of Africa, such as the Inter-Government Authority on Development (IGAD) in eastern Africa, the three regional initiatives in the Great Lakes region, and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in southern and central Africa. The Security Council's cooperation with all of the regional organizations is therefore of paramount importance.

Sanctions are a fundamental tool available to the Security Council in its efforts to ensure peace and security in the world. No one should think that the members of the Security Council are eager to impose sanctions or that they do so easily. Such a decision should be taken with extreme caution and consideration for the population, whose well-being has to be secured. Violations of sanctions are, unfortunately, a common trend in many African conflicts. Lack of compliance with sanctions is indeed a problem, and the Security Council must work hard in that respect in order to devise ways and seek methods of making them effective, workable and just.

A great deal of discussion is taking place on the question of impunity. It is indeed a crucial matter, not only for reasons of principle, namely, upholding the rule of law and justice. It also has a very powerful practical aspect, being a strong deterrent for those who resort to violence to promote their political agenda, and it is a necessary element in any peace and reconciliation effort.

No matter how hard the international community tries, one often gets the feeling that, unless Security Council intervention is combined with long-term development plans, its efforts will be to no avail.

Persistent violent conflict is the cause, but also the result, of poverty. Therefore, if we wish to be effective in tackling either of the two, we must tackle both. The existing institutional gap in the international system can be bridged through the establishment of a peacebuilding commission, as proposed by the Secretary-General and the High-level Panel on Threats,

Challenges and Change. We believe that that is an idea whose time has come.

In conclusion, the promotion of lasting peace and security in Africa — which in turn will be conducive to sustainable economic and social development — constitutes one, if not the principal, major challenge that we, as members of the Security Council, continue to face. The year 2005 is no exception; on the contrary, it is, as many have declared, the year of Africa. The Security Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, under the chairmanship of Benin, may be very fruitful and productive in that regard.

The President: I thank the representative of Greece for the kind words he addressed to me and to my Brazilian colleagues.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): The United Republic of Tanzania commends the Brazilian presidency of the Security Council for what is a most welcome and timely initiative of examining the work of the Council in Africa. During a month in which the Council has spent a significant proportion of its time on African issues covering 10 countries, it is only pertinent and healthy that the Council conduct this evaluation. The transparent manner in which the assessment is being undertaken will surely enrich the work of the Council in its efforts to promote peace and security in Africa. This is a very useful precedent for the future.

The Council's engagement with African issues under your presidency, Sir, continues to demonstrate the significance of conflict prevention in conflict management, which includes a number of wide-ranging factors such as development, democratization, early-warning systems, institutional capacity-building in the areas of human rights and the rule of law, and assisting regional organizations in mediation efforts.

Effective prevention requires the system-wide involvement of the United Nations under the leadership of the Secretary-General, in collaboration with multilateral and bilateral actors. Moreover, experience in conflict management shows that the Council can no longer concentrate only on the effectiveness of preventive-diplomacy missions and of peacekeeping operations. Greater focus is also needed on longer-term efforts to assist countries such as Guinea-Bissau in enhancing durable structures conducive to peace and democratic stability.

There is evidence which suggests that a country emerging from conflict is most at risk of returning to violent instability in the first four years after the signing of a peace agreement. A great number of peace processes in Africa are at or near that point. That suggests that the Council must be willing to seriously look into how it can help Africa and the countries that are going through delicate transformation processes to avoid falling back into chaos and anarchy after considerable investment. The recommendation of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change for a peacebuilding commission, endorsed by the Secretary-General, ought to be advanced for quick adoption and implementation.

It needs to be made clear that, as Africans, we recognize that the primary responsibility for peacebuilding and conflict prevention rests with us. It is in that sense that, even in the midst of war and strife, there is also a new era of peace and stability through which Africa and its leadership have forged a common vision and a shared commitment, as exemplified in the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development. But, if Africa is to be successful, the international community, the United Nations and especially the Security Council must remain important partners for peace and development.

The manner in which conflicts are addressed is a critical component of conflict management: the process is as important as the outcome. After the Naivasha peace process gave way to the north-south peace agreement, there was huge anticipation of action in relation to the peacekeeping mission in southern Sudan. The complexities presented by the situation in Darfur posed a serious challenge to the Council's effectiveness. They also illustrated that, when the Council fails to respond in a timely manner to an evolving political and humanitarian tragedy, it risks being perceived as indecisive and ineffective. We are too conscious that, when the Council lacks effectiveness, it loses its credibility.

It is also true that the working methods of the Council are characterized by dialogue, mutual respect and a search for consensus. The pursuit for consensus is at times criticized for generating inertia, but the merited prize of unity is strength and credibility. Although there are no quick fixes to complex problems, the interlinked nature of threats to international peace and security demand that the Security Council demonstrate unity as well as urgency

in responding to situations of potential or actual conflict.

Just as conflicts are caused, in many cases, by poverty, so also poverty and social and economic exclusion increase the risk of violent conflict. The post-conflict strategies that the Council pursues must seek to destroy the vicious circle of poverty, conflict and underdevelopment. There are successful examples of which the Council can be proud, such as those in Angola and Mozambique. There are also encouraging indicators to guide the Council towards a successful partnership with Africa and its people.

First, the need for early action cannot be overemphasized: the gap between early warning and action must be reduced. Secondly, the need to exploit and strengthen the partnership for peace and development between the Council and the African Union and its organs and regional organizations must be encouraged. Thirdly, integrating a mutually reinforcing approach into development and conflict prevention should be seen not as stretching the mandate of the Council, but rather as enhancing its mandate in partnership with other United Nations bodies and relevant partners.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania for the kind words he addressed to me.

I now call on the representative of Tunisia.

Mr. Hachani (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your outstanding presidency of the Security Council during the month of March. I should also like to thank you for having taken the initiative of organizing a public wrap-up meeting on the Council's deliberations this month and for permitting Member States not members of the Council to express their views on the African dimension of the Council's work.

My delegation attaches the highest importance to conflict prevention in Africa through the enhancement of coordination and cooperation among United Nations bodies, programmes and specialized agencies, the international financial institutions and the international community as a whole with a view to resolving the underlying social and economic causes of conflict in Africa.

With regard to conflict prevention, my delegation would also like to mention the importance of combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Although we express our support for the right of all States to import, produce and possess such weapons for the needs of legitimate self-defence and security, we believe that the spread of illicit light weapons is an obstacle to the peaceful settlement of disputes and contributes to prolonging conflict. We hope that the Second Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, scheduled for July 2005, will yield fruitful results. Along those lines, we believe that States Members of the United Nations should seek to bring to a successful conclusion the deliberations of the Open-ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace in a Timely and Reliable Manner Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

We appreciate the tireless efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to confront emergency situations in Africa. The close cooperation between Member States and the Secretariat helps to strengthen the United Nations peacekeeping capacities, but those efforts alone will not ensure the success of peacekeeping operations unless they are accompanied by appropriate adaptation on the part of all actors and partners.

In that regard, Tunisia supports more advanced and interactive consultations through the consultation mechanism between the Secretariat, the Security Council and troop-contributing countries so as to enable Member States to be better informed about the situation on the ground in a complete and regular fashion. It will be necessary in the future to give greater consideration to the concerns of the troop-contributing countries, whose opinions should be more than advisory.

The Tunisian delegation believes that United Nations cooperation with regional organizations under Chapter VIII of the Charter is of prime importance. In that respect, my delegation would again emphasize its interest in cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, particularly in order to improve the latter's institutional capacities.

Africa is currently host to three quarters of the Blue Helmets who are deployed throughout the world. Africa's efforts to take control of its own fate call for

increased support from the United Nations and the international community. We believe that the recent establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, aimed at creating a regional conflict-prevention policy, will greatly help African States.

However, international efforts to strengthen the collective peacekeeping abilities of African countries do not absolve the international community of its collective obligations under the United Nations Charter, which confers upon the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In that context, my delegation welcomes the peace and reconciliation efforts that have been launched in Somalia and fully endorses the opinions expressed regarding the need to evince due interest in the situation in that country. We call on the United Nations in general and the Security Council in particular to shoulder their responsibilities for maintaining peace and security in that fraternal country.

We wish to stress that the end of the mandate of a peacekeeping mission does not mean that a solid peace has been established. Lasting peace can be established only if we address the deep-rooted causes of conflicts and create the political, economic and social bases for long-term peacebuilding. The international community must work in unison to that end. The proposal under discussion to establish a United Nations peacebuilding commission deserves our full attention.

While we prefer that conflicts be settled peacefully, we acknowledge that some extreme situations require the imposition of sanctions in the interest of maintaining international peace and security. However, given the trend towards ever more frequent recourse to sanctions, which tend mostly to affect African countries, we would emphasize that the Security Council's prerogatives in that area should be exercised in conformity with the United Nations Charter and international law.

Tunisia is proud to belong to Africa and is most especially interested in anything that can help to reduce tensions on the continent and to resolve conflicts. Since 1960, my country has participated in peacekeeping missions in the Congo and is currently involved in four such missions in Africa. We are prepared to continue to do so, within our means, because we believe that the solution to Africa's problems is primarily the responsibility of the African countries themselves. However, the international community as a whole and the Security Council in particular must also continue to play their full role.

The President: I thank the representative of Tunisia for his kind words addressed to me.

I now call on the representative of Cuba.

Mr. López Clemente (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Our delegation welcomes Brazil's initiative of convening this wrap-up meeting as an open debate. It is a contribution to the efforts aimed at achieving the necessary and urgent goal of making the work of the Security Council more transparent. It would be appropriate for such wrap-up sessions to be held systematically in the future and for delegations to address any question of interest with respect to the work of the Security Council throughout a given month.

A great deal has been said about the difficult circumstances of life in Africa and about the growing needs of the continent, where the majority of today's armed conflicts are taking place, killing many people in several countries and having devastating effects on their economic and social development.

The historical origins of the African crisis cannot be ignored. Thus, the former colonial Powers currently have the moral obligation to make up for the consequences of their acts. Likewise, the persistence of an unjust and unsustainable international economic order, characterized by inequalities imposed by the neoliberal globalization process, places the so-called third world, and particularly the African continent, at a terrible disadvantage. Such vast inequalities are the sole cause of the fact that the African population, which constitutes approximately 18.5 per cent of the world's population and whose territory comprises the greatest reserves of natural resources on the planet, contributes approximately 1 per cent of the world's gross domestic product and 2 per cent of international trade.

We appreciate the Security Council's efforts to achieve a better understanding of the conflicts in Africa, accompanied in recent years by the development of African mechanisms for resolving conflicts. Nevertheless, greater and more systematic support from the United Nations and the international community in general is required, for the region suffers from insufficient financial resources, hindering the

achievement and/or consolidation of peace in many countries, such as the Sudan and Somalia, to provide just two examples.

Despite what has been stated in debates and affirmed in many resolutions, in practice emphasis is still on reaction to African conflicts and not on their prevention. Prevention requires the deepest causes of conflicts, such as poverty and underdevelopment, to be addressed. There can be no peace without development or development without peace.

On the other hand, many of the measures necessary to eliminate the causes of conflict in Africa and to achieve the consolidation of peace and sustainable development clearly do not fall within the scope of the Security Council's mandate and are the purview of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. An adequate level of coordination between those principal organs is therefore required.

Since its beginnings, the Cuban revolution has implemented a policy of cooperation in various fields with the countries of Africa, a continent to which we are attached by profound bonds of history and friendship. Cuba, a blockaded country with limited financial resources but with the necessary political will, has always offered its cooperation in solidarity with African countries, expecting nothing in return. Within the context of such cooperation, its comprehensive health care programme, carried out in 18 African countries with a total of 1,249 participants, is of particular note. 3,381 participants have already offered their services within the framework of that programme.

Likewise, from 1961 to the 2003-2004 school year, 29,876 African youths from more than 40 African countries have graduated from middle and high schools. Currently, 1,801 African students are enrolled in educational programmes in Cuba; such studies are entirely subsidized by the Cuban Government. We have offered 427 scholarships for the 2005-2006 school year.

Africa does not need paternalism. Rather, it deserves, first and foremost, respect and solidarity. It needs cooperation that is free from every kind of conditions and intervention. There is a great deal of wisdom and experience among African leaders and representatives. No one is better qualified than they are to understand their problems; no one is better able to determine the best solutions.

I should like to conclude by quoting the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, who, during the most recent general debate in the General Assembly, said, with reference to the Millennium Development Goals:

> "We said that we would pay attention to Africa's special needs. However, very little has been done. African nations do not need foreign advice or models, but rather financial resources and access to both markets and technologies. Assisting Africa would not be an act of charity, but an act of justice, a settling of the historic debt resulting from centuries of exploitation and pillage." (*A/59/PV.10, p. 33*)

The President: I thank the representative of Cuba for his kind words addressed to my country, Brazil.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Brazil.

I would like to thank all the delegations that have taken part in this wrap-up meeting on the work of the Security Council for the month of March 2005.

My delegation believes that exercises of this nature, which seek to enhance interaction and to promote constructive debate between members and non-members of the Council, should be encouraged and embraced as a regular practice. On the one hand, the Council greatly benefits from the exchange of views. On the other, the wider membership is exposed to a variety of opinions, concepts and stances that influence and shape the Council's decisions. It is therefore an exercise in exchange of views, transparency and accountability.

The reason the delegation of Brazil chose this subject — the African dimension in the work of the Security Council — is quite clear. African issues currently add up to more than 60 per cent of the Council's agenda. While, until 1997, most United Nations operations were deployed in Europe and the Middle East, we have, since 1998, been witnessing a steady increase of peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts in Africa.

The work of the Council during the month of March, highly concentrated on African issues, is not an exception to this trend. In no other matter can the Council's work as a whole be better assessed or evaluated.

Secondly, we chose this subject because of our historical and cultural ties with the nations of the African continent, which make us particularly sensitive to their aspirations and concerns about living in peace, prosperity and security. Brazil has the second largest population of African descent in the world — the largest outside Africa.

All told — including both consultations and formal meetings — the Council held some 25 meetings on African issues during March: 25 meetings in 24 working days. These figures give us an idea of the time, attention and resources that the Council devotes to Africa, and they reflect the fundamental interest of the United Nations, as a universal Organization, in tackling conflict situations on that continent.

However, this strong trend may also be interpreted as the simple result of the Council's not being effective enough in early crisis identification and conflict avoidance. It has been argued that the Council must evolve from the logic of resolution to that of the prevention of conflict. The delegation of Brazil supports that evolution.

The mixed picture offered by the results of the Security Council's engagement in Africa should lead us to further reflection. Side by side, there are success stories and textbook cases of the re-emergence of conflict. While the Council can benefit from past experience, it must accept that the international order is in a state of flux. As a principal organ of the United Nations, the Council must also be ready for a permanent process of evolution. We must never cease to question and to improve our methods of work, our political perceptions, our cost-benefit analyses and our structure. The Council must look forward to major improvements on all these and many other fronts.

The statements delivered today covered a wide range of important issues, and I would like to mention just a few of them. A number of delegations pointed out the importance of strengthening interaction with the African Union and regional organizations on the basis of more intensive cooperation and coordination with regard to conflict prevention and management. Some delegations underlined the root causes of African conflict and the need to combine peace and security efforts with long-term development strategies. There were many references to institutional dialogue among the principal bodies of the United Nations, in particular the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Some delegations also acknowledged the need for other concerted efforts, including fair trade and development assistance, as well as the greater involvement of international financial institutions, programmes and agencies to that end. Delegations also referred to the recent recommendations of the Secretary-General contained in the report entitled "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005), especially with regard to the establishment of a peacebuilding commission. Some delegations made concrete proposals in that regard.

Other aspects were also covered in this rich debate. There were even comments relating to the subject of the wrap-up meeting on the African dimension itself to the effect that it should be undertaken on a regular basis.

It is my delegation's intention to provide, at a later stage, a summary of the ideas discussed, which we will be pleased to circulate all Members of the United Nations.

I wish now to make some comments related specifically to Brazilian national views on these matters. First, addressing the deep-rooted social and economic causes of conflict in Africa, as a way to prevent either their outbreak or their resurgence, seems to be a vanguard task to be tackled by the United Nations as a whole. We welcome the greater involvement of the Economic and Social Council in this task, in particular by means of the creation of ad hoc working groups such as those established for Burundi and for Guinea-Bissau.

Nevertheless, we believe that these joint efforts — placing the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council on the same board — still lack the formal institutional frameworks and adequate channels necessary to maximize the quality of their responses.

My delegation has consistently advocated, over the years, the adoption of rules and procedures to put Article 65 of the Charter fully into force, in order to explore its many potential benefits. We are also eager to discuss proposals, in the context of the reform of the Organization, on the establishment of a peacebuilding commission that would help bring together the objectives of peace and security on one hand, and sustained development on the other.

After working in the Council for 15 months now, and having accompanied it from this chair for one month, I daresay this Chamber needs a new perspective. A new dimension should be added to our approach — and that, of course, is sustainability. The Council is responsible for peace and security, not for a year, not for two years, not for the short while when there is a peacekeeping operation deployed to distant countries and provinces. No: the Council is consistently responsible for a peace that can be sustained in time.

Military action is needed and is crucial if we are to provide security and ensure that fragile peace processes can flourish. However, in parallel, we need concrete action to lead people out of the vicious circle of hopelessness and immediate gain, thereby providing for a sustainable peace.

The international community — meaning all of us — has to help provide the alternatives. We have to cooperate for stable and democratic institutions to be built and for primary humanitarian needs to be attended to. We have to alleviate poverty and provide education through direct assistance, and ensure development and employment through fair trade. It is only when the peace dividends are palpable for the people in countries in conflict that the probability of recurrence of conflict will subside.

Secondly, the decision-making process within the Security Council would be substantially improved by making use of first-hand information regarding conflicts in Africa. For instance, only two days ago, the Council was briefed by the representative of the African Union mediators on the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, who provided the Council with vivid testimony of the challenges before the Council as it seeks to achieve the goals of promoting peace and security in that country.

Certainly, members of the Council benefit from high-quality information provided by the Secretariat — which is very useful — as well as from individual members of the Council. Yet, the views of those directly linked to conflicts under review and their particular assessment of the constraints on, and the possibilities for, the action of the United Nations must be duly taken into consideration. Nor should the increased cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, such as the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the Southern African Development Community in the case of Africa, be in any way disregarded.

In that context of amassing tools for decision-making, the delegation of Brazil is also highly supportive of regular Security Council missions to countries in conflict. Missions of the Security Council provide a unique opportunity for members to engage in the realities of the conflicts the Council is seized of. The Council has been carrying out regular missions to Africa, and we believe that the practice should be maintained and even increased.

As well, resorting to alternative means of dialogue with non-governmental institutions, whether international non-governmental organizations or local representatives of civil society, should be stimulated.

The closer cooperation between peacekeeping operations and political missions deployed in the same region, as well as coordination among United Nations offices and agencies in different countries, is yet another recent and very positive development in peacekeeping that must be further supported and advanced. The various United Nations presences in West Africa, and those in the Great Lakes region, are demonstrating the gains that can be obtained through their coordinated efforts and joint activities.

Another fact to be stressed is that peace processes currently being undertaken in Africa rely on growing regional and subregional African diplomatic efforts and military components, thus demonstrating the strong and increasingly effective commitment of African States to intra-African solutions. Nevertheless, we should not expect the region to provide all the resources it needs to keep and build peace. The larger international community must do its share.

In that regard, we also believe that the interests and general views of Africa would receive greater consideration if the Council were to count on the permanent membership of African countries. Brazil supports the proposal that two new permanent seats be conferred on the African regional group and welcomes the prospect of that occurring.

Thirdly, and finally, on the highly important issue of combating impunity, my delegation believes that primary responsibility for bringing perpetrators to justice belongs to local courts and tribunals. However, in some cases, local institutions do not have the capacity to investigate and prosecute, and, in other

cases, the fight against impunity may be hampered by reluctant authorities. In such cases, we believe that the Council should look to the International Criminal Court (ICC), given its international status, permanent structure and mandate.

With two investigative processes already under way, and another under consideration, the ICC is proving to be an effective tool of deterrence and, as such, will greatly contribute to international security. Ultimately, the full credibility of the Court is directly proportional to its universality. We therefore encourage States that have not yet done so to accede to the Rome Statute.

In closing, I would like to thank all delegations that participated in this debate, in particular the African delegations. Their insightful comments and suggestions and their constructive contributions have greatly added to the liveliness of this valuable debate. I certainly hope that the many rich and articulate ideas contained in those statements will provide food for thought for all of us as Members of the Organization.

The United Nations finds itself on the verge of major reform. It should draw on the views and opinions of the majority of its Members to make itself more capable of dealing with the ever-changing challenges and threats on the international scene.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.